

CLAIMS

1. A toothbrush (2) of elongate form, comprising  
bristles (9), and so designed as to exhibit, on a  
flat horizontal support (30), at least one  
position of stable equilibrium in which the  
longitudinal direction of the brush is essentially  
parallel to the support and the bristles (9) lie  
at a distance from the support and extend toward  
the support, characterized in that said  
position(s) of stable equilibrium is or are the  
only position(s) of stable equilibrium of the  
brush on the support.
2. The brush as claimed in claim 1, characterized in  
that there is only one said position of stable  
equilibrium of the brush.
3. The brush as claimed in claim 1 or 2,  
characterized in that the brush comprises:
- a distal portion (20);
  - a proximal portion (16) extending between the  
bristles (9) and the distal portion (20) in the  
longitudinal direction; and
  - an intermediate portion (17) between the distal  
and proximal portions,
- the brush being so designed that, for any position  
in which the brush is supported by a flat  
horizontal support (30) with the longitudinal  
direction essentially parallel to the support, the  
distal (20) and proximal (16) portions constitute  
the portions of contact of the brush with the flat  
support (30) and the intermediate portion (17)  
lies at a distance from the support.
4. The brush as claimed in claim 3, characterized in  
that the brush is so designed that the proximal  
portion (16) exhibits a single point of contact

(34) with the support (30) in the or each position of stable equilibrium.

5. The brush as claimed in claim 3 or 4, characterized in that the brush is so designed that, for any position in which the brush (2) is supported by a flat horizontal support (30) with the longitudinal direction essentially parallel to the support, the proximal portion (16) exhibits a single point of contact with the support.
6. The brush as claimed in any one of claims 3-5, characterized in that the proximal portion (16) is of a generally flat shape.
7. The brush as claimed in any one of claims 3-6, characterized in that the proximal portion (16) is of a generally flat shape in a plane essentially perpendicular to the longitudinal direction of the brush.
8. The brush as claimed in any one of claims 3-7, characterized in that the proximal portion (16) is of a generally flat shape in a plane that is essentially inclined with respect to the longitudinal direction of the brush.
9. The brush as claimed in any one of claims 3-8, characterized in that the proximal portion (16) is off-center with respect to a central longitudinal axis of the brush.
10. The brush as claimed in any one of claims 3-9, characterized in that, the brush comprising a handle (4), the proximal portion (16) projects from a side of the handle opposite another side of the handle supporting the bristles (9).

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11. The brush as claimed in claim 10, characterized in that the proximal portion (16) projects from the handle (4) all the way around a longitudinal axis of the brush.
12. The brush as claimed in claim 10 or 11, characterized in that the proximal portion (16) forms with the handle (4) a re-entrant edge (24) on a side of the proximal portion situated toward the bristles (9).
13. The brush as claimed in any one of claims 10-12, characterized in that the proximal portion (16) forms with the handle (4) a re-entrant edge (26) on a side of the proximal portion situated toward the distal portion (20).
14. The brush as claimed in any one of claims 3-13, characterized in that the proximal portion (16) has an elastomeric outer face.
15. The brush as claimed in any one of claims 3-14, characterized in that the brush is so designed that the distal portion (20) exhibits two points of contact with the support in the or each position of stable equilibrium.
16. The brush as claimed in any one of claims 3-15, characterized in that the distal portion (20) has a flat (18) generally parallel to the longitudinal direction of the brush.
17. The brush as claimed in any one of claims 1-16, characterized in that the brush has the shape illustrated in one of figures 1-5.
18. A toothbrush (2) of elongate form and comprising bristles (9), characterized in that it is so designed that, when the brush is placed in any

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initial position on a flat horizontal support (30), the brush spontaneously adopts a stable position in which the longitudinal direction of the brush is essentially parallel to the support (30) and the bristles (9) lie at a distance from the support and extend toward the support.

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19. The brush as claimed in claim 18, characterized in that the brush is so designed that the stable position is always the same, whatever said initial position may be.
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